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23 August 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

(*South Vietnam: Troop presence is now reported less obtrusive in both Saigon and Hué but tight security precautions are still being enforced.)

(The government asserts that emergency measures are directed only against extremist Buddhist leaders and that monks not involved in subversive activities will be released. Government spokesmen predict military rule may soon be ended but Presidential Secretary Thuan has commented that martial law will probably force postponement of national assembly elections scheduled for 31 August.)

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(the imposition of martial law was recommended to Diem by the generals on 20 August. Nhu denied that there was any intention by the generals to substitute himself for Diem and said they had repeatedly declared their loyalty to the President.)

(Nhu stressed that under martial law the military have authority for national security but not for civil affairs. He said Diem could recover control "tomorrow if necessary," but warned that if the President vacillated or sought a compromise on the Buddhist issue there could be a military coup d'etat.)

(It is still not certain that all key elements in the military approve of the steps taken. The US Air Attaché reports that some of his military contacts have indicated a lack of solidarity with the present authority.)

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UN-Congo: (Premier Adoula has officially asked U Thant to leave some UN forces in the Congo through June 1964, but the secretary general has been advised by his military aide, Major General Rikhye, that retention of troops beyond December 1963 is "desirable but not vital.")

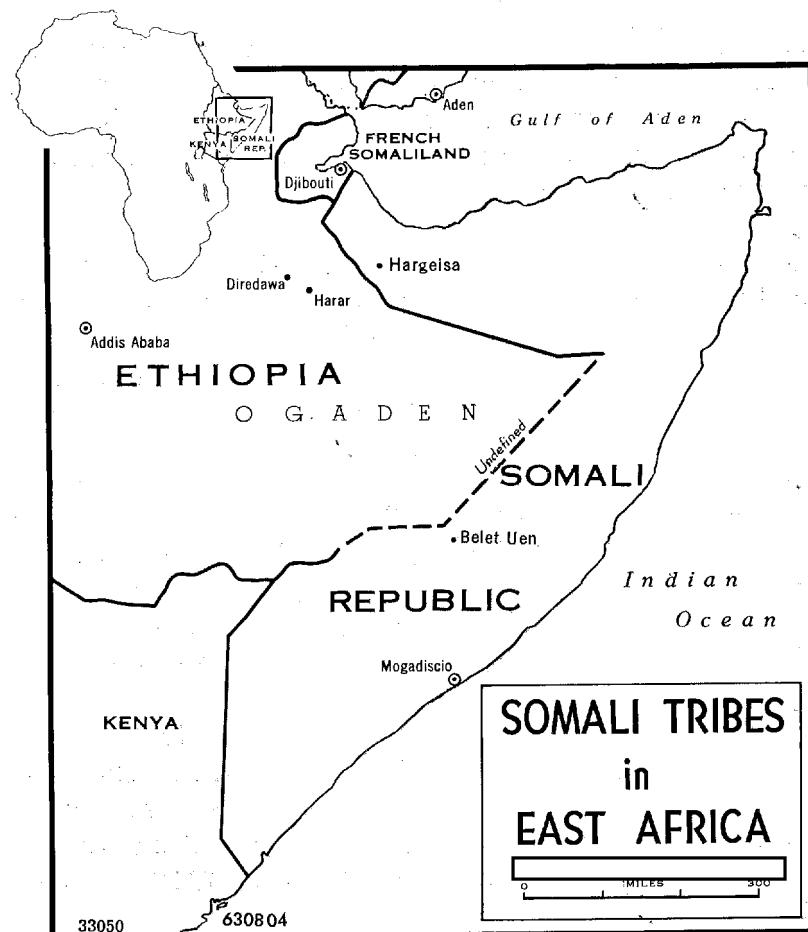
(According to Rikhye, who has recently returned from the Congo, the general security situation there is "very stable." He alleges that a majority of the diplomatic representatives in Leopoldville agrees that the retention of ONUC forces beyond the end of this year is not a critical issue.)

(Rikhye has also advised Thant that insofar as the UN is concerned, the emergency in Katanga is over and the UN's mandate is accomplished. A new mandate is therefore needed "immediately" to govern conduct of the UN forces until the end of the year.)

(UN legal authorities have begun a study to determine the exact status of the UN's mandate in the Congo, particularly that portion pertaining to the rendering of assistance to the Congolese in the maintenance of law and order.)

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Ethiopia - Somali Republic: (The Ethiopian Government evidently has become extremely bitter and aggressive over what it regards as Western support for Somali dissidence.)

(In a statement to the US ambassador on 20 August, Emperor Haile Selassie accused the US of "knowingly or unknowingly" encouraging Somali irredentism in Ethiopia's Ogaden region, where fighting is going on between Ethiopian security forces and well-armed Somali tribesmen.)

(The Emperor appeared particularly incensed that the US Embassy in Mogadiscio had sent observers to interview refugees from the Ogaden. He implied that the recent announcement by Somali dissidents of the formation of a "government" in the Ogaden was a result of the US decision to supply arms to the Somali Republic.)

(The Emperor said that he intends to make a similar presentation of his views to the President during a state visit he is scheduled to make to the US in early October.)

(Other ambassadors in Addis Ababa have been told by the acting foreign minister that the Somalis would have to be taught a lesson if they continue to foment trouble in the Ogaden. According to the British chargé, the minister pointedly observed that there is widespread discontent in the northern region of the Somali Republic and that there are many Somali refugees in Ethiopia who could return there to cause trouble.)

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Czechoslovakia: In an attempt to halt growing demands for effective de-Stalinization, which have greatly weakened party leader Novotny's position, Prague has belatedly made public its decision to alter some of the verdicts of the 1949-54 purge trials.

As a result of these trials, during which some 480 persons were arraigned for "crimes against the party and state," 11--including former party secretary general Slansky--were executed and scores imprisoned. According to Prague's 22 August announcement, party membership was restored to all but Slansky and four others who were cleared only of crimes against the state.

This reaffirmation of Slansky's guilt for "party violations" was a face-saving device for Novotny--who eventually succeeded Slansky as leading party secretary in 1953 and had been directly involved in the preparation of the trials.

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[redacted]

(Party members were informed of the decision on the trials in April but public announcement was delayed four months in hopes that strong popular dissatisfaction with earlier limited de-Stalinization measures would subside.) Demands for full redressment of past errors and pressures for the removal of remaining Stalinists from the leadership are likely to continue.

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*Soviet Bloc - China: State relations between the Soviet-led bloc and Communist China are growing progressively worse.

Czechoslovakia's closure of the NCNA office in Prague on 22 August reflects the growing tendency of opponents in the intrabloc struggle to pursue their dispute more openly on the governmental level. Peiping's insistence on using its official personnel in bloc countries to distribute polemical material had earlier resulted in less drastic action by East Germany, Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia.

Since China has insisted that it has a right to use its officials in this way, more expulsions and perhaps the closure of other NCNA offices in the Soviet bloc can be expected.

Recent statements of the Soviet Union and Communist China on the nuclear test-ban-treaty issue have made no attempt to disguise the fact that the bitter struggle is between the two governments and not solely a party or doctrinal matter. Although Moscow has now published the Chinese statements to point up the "slanders" in them, the Soviet Embassy in Peiping had earlier refused to accept them for transmission to its government.

The deterioration manifested in these and other actions, however, will probably not lead to a formal break in diplomatic relations in the immediate future. It is more likely that, as has been the case with party relations, antagonism will be more and more clearly demonstrated while minimal surface trappings of protocol are maintained.

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NOTES

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UN-Yemen: U Thant has designated his military adviser, Major General Rikhye, as temporary commander of the UN Yemen Observation Mission to replace General Von Horn who resigned earlier this week. Thant is still worried that Von Horn will make a "scandal" out of his departure, but the Swedish Government has assured him that it will attempt to keep Von Horn in line. Rikhye emerged from organizing the UN forces in the Congo with an enhanced international reputation.

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Portugal: Wealthy Portuguese families with major interests in the overseas territories will probably not support the Salazar regime in any "forlorn hope" attempt to retain the African territories at all costs, according to the US Embassy in Lisbon. Most of them will prefer to write off losses on their investments in Africa in order to protect their interests at home. In the meantime, however, they will continue to back the regime's objective of trying to buy time in the hope that international support will rally to Portugal's cause.

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